



For Immediate Release

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Banner, Vitalant partner to increase blood donations

Supplies approaching critical levels during COVID-19 pandemic

PHOENIX (March 24, 2020) – Banner Health is partnering with the region's blood bank operator in an effort to restore blood donations, which have significantly dropped during the outbreak of COVID-19 cases. Together with Vitalant, we want to highlight upcoming blood drives and avoid supplies from reaching critically low levels.

Vitalant leaders say blood donations are still safe. Staff take steps to ensure surfaces are thoroughly disinfected between donors and social distancing protocols are followed to minimize the potential for transmission of the new coronavirus.

"We all play an important role in protecting public health," said Gov. Doug Ducey, R-Arizona. "If you are healthy, please consider donating blood."

Federal leaders also encourage those who are able to donate to do so, reassuring the public blood donation is safe and an "essential health care activity."

Upcoming blood donation events include:

East Valley

[Banner Gateway Medical Center](#) (1900 N Higley Rd., Gilbert, AZ 85234)

- Thursday, March 26, 7 a.m. to Noon
- Tuesday, March 31, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Vitalant RV parked on east side of campus near main entrance

[Banner Baywood Medical Center](#) (6644 E Baywood Ave., Mesa, AZ 85206)

- Thursday, March 26, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Vitalant RV parked on west side of campus near parking garage

West Valley

[Banner Estrella Medical Center](#) (9201 W Thomas Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85037)

- Thursday, April 16, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Vitalant RV parked on west side of campus near main entrance

[Banner Boswell Medical Center](#) (10401 W Thunderbird Blvd., Sun City, AZ 85351)

- Thursday, April 23, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Vitalant RV parked near south entrance

[Banner Del E. Webb Medical Center](#) (14502 W Meeker Blvd, Sun City West, AZ 85375)

- Friday, April 24, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Vitalant RV parked near south entrance

Vitalant asks potential donors to [make an appointment](#) on its website ahead of the event. This will prevent crowds from forming. To create a safe and secure environment for our patients and our health care workers during the COVID-19 outbreak, visitors are not allowed in Banner hospitals until further notice. We understand this will be challenging, but we're committed to take the necessary precautions to protect our patients, health care workers and the community.

"Our blood collection sites are a 'first response' action to this outbreak versus a gathering that needs to be avoided," said Ralph Vassallo, MD, Vitalant's chief medical and scientific officer. "If you're healthy, you're needed now more than ever. We cannot let it get to the point where there's no blood available for trauma patients, those undergoing cancer treatment and patients who need regular, ongoing blood transfusions just to survive."

Headquartered in Arizona, Banner Health is one of the largest nonprofit health care systems in the country. The system owns and operates 28 acute-care hospitals, Banner Health Network, Banner – University Medicine, academic and employed physician groups, long-term care centers, outpatient surgery centers and an array of other services; including Banner Urgent Care, family clinics, home care and hospice services, pharmacies and a nursing registry. Banner Health is in six states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Nebraska, Nevada and Wyoming. For more information, visit www.BannerHealth.com.

Vitalant ("vye-TAL-ent") is the nation's second largest community blood service provider, supplying comprehensive transfusion medicine services for nearly 1,000 hospitals and health care partners for patients in need across 40 states. Vitalant inspires local communities to serve the needs of others and transform lives through the selfless act of donating blood. Every day, almost 5,000 blood donations are needed to meet the needs of people throughout the country, and Vitalant's 800,000 donors supply 1.8 million donations a year. In addition to blood products, Vitalant offers customers transfusion services, medical consulting, quality guidance, ongoing education, research and more. For more information and to schedule a donation, visit vitalant.org or call 877-258-4825 (877-25-VITAL). Join the conversation about impacting the lives of others on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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